



**UNITED STATES TAX COURT**  
WASHINGTON, DC

**POSITION VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

<b>Position Title/Series:</b>	<b>Information Technology Specialist (APPSW/SYSADMIN) - GS-2210-11/12/13/14</b>
<b>Announcement Number:</b>	<b>21-06</b>
<b>Position Type:</b>	<b>Full-Time Permanent</b>
<b>Opening Date:</b>	<b>April 22, 2021</b>
<b>Closing Date:</b>	<b>Until Filled</b>
<b>Annual Salary Range:</b>	<b>Base salary range is \$55,756 -- \$122,077 A locality adjustment will be included once the duty station is determined. Starting salary also is dependent upon qualifications, experience, official duty station, and availability of funds.</b>
<b>Area of Consideration:</b>	<b>All Sources, All U.S. Citizens and Nationals May Apply (This is an Excepted Service, at-will position)</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Washington, D.C. or Remote (must be in the United States), Office of the Clerk of the Court</b>
<b>Supervisory:</b>	<b>No</b>

**POSITION SUMMARY**

As a DevOps Engineer at the US Tax Court, you will be a builder, contributor, and catalyst, collaborating with a cross-functional team on DAWSON, an open source case management system. You will promote the use of user-centered, agile, and modern software development practices and report to the Senior Software Developer (Technical Lead) for DAWSON.

The DAWSON Team is currently comprised of the Project/Product Manager, Senior Software Developer (Tech Lead), DevOps Engineer, Product Owner, Product Specialist -- all Court employees -- as well as a vendor development team, consisting of a Project/Delivery Manager, 11 full-stack engineers, and 2 UX Designers/Researchers.

**DUTIES**

- Using and advising on site reliability engineering best practices to help build and operate the DAWSON infrastructure at scale. DAWSON is currently written in Node.js and runs on Amazon Web Services, deployed through Terraform.
- Develop new theories, concepts, guidelines, and methods for DAWSON's technical,

infrastructure, and operations support strategy in order to improve test coverage, reliability, and performance.

- Advise the Technical Lead and Chief Information Officer on adapting new principles, standards, and emerging technologies for developing DAWSON, its API, and integration with other software products the Court uses to perform its duties more efficiently.
- Interface with external stakeholders to ensure safe and reliable service of Court documents.
- Assisting the Tech Lead in responding to incidents, postmortem review, creating automation in areas such as security compliance and code deployment.
- Monitoring runtime metrics and logs to ensure DAWSON's standards of performance and reliability.
- Working with the vendor development team on a daily basis to facilitate progress and help provide direction.
- Handling escalated user support requests which require a deeper technical understanding, including log investigation and bug reproduction.
- Maintaining non-production environments for testing and training purposes, including replicating production-like data sets.
- Supporting a safe, inclusive workplace and a positive team culture where all team members value diversity and individual differences.

## **Key Objectives**

### **1. Operate DAWSON with a high standard of performance and reliability.**

- Define key success metrics for DAWSON's infrastructure and drive improvement toward those measures
- Create and improve monitoring systems to collect data about the application, notify on any errors, and improve visibility/observability into application behavior
- Assist the Tech Lead in deploying code to the application regularly and as automatically as possible
- Assist in incident response and mitigate site errors as they occur
- Lead postmortem discussions and drive continuous improvement to prevent similar issues

### **2. Build and advise on DAWSON's infrastructure using cloud infrastructure techniques.**

- Use infrastructure-as-code (currently Terraform) and configuration management to automate DAWSON's infrastructure (currently Amazon Web Services (AWS))
- Review code and consult with other engineers on new features and their implications for site performance, reliability, and security
- Conduct load tests to ensure the application is ready to handle projected user traffic
- Improve automation and fault tolerance of the deployment process
- Drive long-term improvement in DAWSON's system availability by removing single points of failure
- Maintain non-production environments for testing and training purposes, including replicating production-like data sets

### **3. Collaborate and investigate user support requests.**

- Serve as a Tier 3 user support escalation to investigate application logs (currently stored in Elasticsearch/Kibana) and understand system failures
- Support Product Specialist on Tier 1 / 2 user support issues, as necessary
- Advise Tech Lead and Product Owner on prioritization of escalated user support requests

## REQUIREMENTS

**Basic Requirements:** Have experience demonstrating EACH of the five competencies listed below:

- **Attention to Detail** - This skill is generally demonstrated by assignments where the applicant keeps abreast of latest technology, information, research, etc., to maintain knowledge in field of expertise (for example, reads trade journals, participates in professional/technical associations, maintains credentials). Certifications such as CompTIA Security+, AWS Certified DevOps Engineer, DevOps Foundation Certification, or their equivalent demonstrate desired expertise.
- **Customer Service** - This skill is generally demonstrated by assignments where the applicant promotes or develops and maintains good working relationships with key individuals or groups.
- **Oral Communication** - This skill is generally demonstrated by assignments where the applicant serves on panels, committees, or task forces as a representative for the organization on technical or professional issues.
- **Written Communication** - This skill is generally demonstrated by assignments where the applicant has produced a written work product (for example, writing or creating training materials, technical documentation).
- **Problem Solving** - This skill is generally demonstrated by assignments where the applicant monitors current trends or events (for example, technological, economic, political, social, educational, or employment trends or events) and applies the information as appropriate.

**Specialized experience requirements:** In addition to the Basic Requirements listed above, you must have two (2) years of specialized experience in EACH of the following:

- Experience delivering projects, tools or products as part of an engineering team. This includes experience developing or architecting complex modern web applications or cloud infrastructure using approaches such as test-driven development, continuous integration & deployment, or distributed version control such as GitHub.
- Experience with programming and scripting languages such as JavaScript, Python, and Bash.

**The full-performance level of this position is a GS-14.** In order to become a GS-14, an employee must work at least 52 weeks at the next lower grade, must be performing their current position at a fully-successful level, and must show evidence of performing duties at the next higher grade level. Promotion consideration is subject to the supervisor's discretion.

### Conditions of Employment

- Applicants must be United States Citizens or Nationals.
- All Court employees are required to adhere to the *Code of Conduct for US Tax Court Employees*.
- **Employees of the United States Tax Court are considered “at-will” employees, and, as such, may be terminated with or without cause.**
- Those who are required must abide by Selective Service registration requirements.
- **Selection of this position is contingent on a favorable suitability determination and security background check, to include credit check, Federal income tax check and criminal check. A candidate selected for this position must be current on his or her Federal income tax obligations before employment with the Tax Court, and must**

**remain current at all times while employed by the Tax Court. Continued employment post appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of the background investigation and credit check, and favorable adjudication. A background reinvestigation or supplemental investigation may be required at a later time.**

- All applicant information is subject to verification.
- The Federal Financial Reform Act requires direct deposit of federal wages for Court employees.

## **HOW APPLICANTS WILL BE EVALUATED**

Ratings will be based on an evaluation of applicant's experience as related to the duties of this position and the qualification requirements listed above. **The resume/application package must provide detailed information showing the extent to which the qualification requirements are satisfied.**

If you fail to provide the information as required, your application will not be evaluated beyond the basic screening process. The examining Office of Human Resources (OHR) makes the final determination concerning whether you meet the minimum qualifications.

If you meet the minimum qualifications for this position, the Court will then evaluate your application package to assess the quality, depth, and complexity of your accomplishments, experience, and education as they relate to the requirements listed in this vacancy announcement.

**Application of Preference Eligibles:** Preference eligibles will be placed above non-preference eligibles within each rating category. Preference eligibles who meet the eligibility and qualification requirements and who have a compensable service-connected disability of at least 10 percent are listed in the highest quality category, except when the position being filled is scientific or professional at the GS-9 level or higher.

**Special Appointment Authority Information:** In accordance with the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) of 1998, veterans who are preference eligibles or who have been separated from the armed forces under honorable conditions after 3 years or more of continuous service may also apply.

**You must provide documentation of veterans' preference or military service (e.g., SF-15, DD-214), if applicable.**

## **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

1. A resume that clearly demonstrates you have experience which meets the requirements of this position (do not include personally identifiable information such as social security number);
2. A supplemental written statement, not to exceed 4 pages, which provides a description of basic and specialized experience requirements; and
3. Most recent Notification of Personnel Action, SF-50 (for current and former Federal employees).

**These application materials must be submitted electronically in PDF format to [humanresources@ustaxcourt.gov](mailto:humanresources@ustaxcourt.gov).**

**NOTE: AN INCOMPLETE APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

***The United States Tax Court is an equal opportunity employer.***